

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 3, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer:

The H-2B visa program was created to provide access to non-immigrant, temporary workers for seasonal and peak load needs when no American workers can be found. Foreign workers offer small and seasonal businesses short-term help and return to their home country at the end of their season. H-2B visas are capped at 66,000 visas per year. Even with 66,000 visas a year, it still does not meet the labor needs of seasonal businesses.

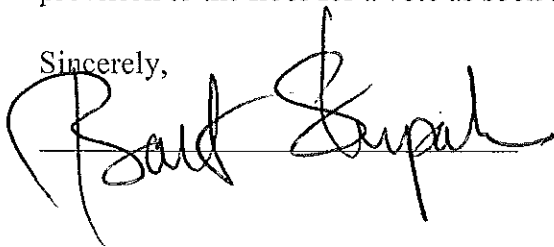
To help fill the additional needs for temporary workers, Congress established a two year program in 2005 which exempts returning workers, who have received an H-2B visa in one of the three previous fiscal years, from counting against the 66,000 H-2B visa cap. Last year, Congress included a 1 year extension of the program in the National Defense Authorization Act. However, this provision expired on September 30, 2007.

In fiscal year 2006, the U.S. admitted 122,511 foreign workers under the H-2B visa program. According to USCIS, 50,854 of these workers were admitted under the returning worker provision and were not counted against the cap. These returning workers have provided much needed relief to the tourism industry, seafood processors, landscapers, resorts, pool companies, carnivals and other small and seasonal businesses across the nation that rely on the H-2B Visa program. Without an immediate extension, these businesses will face labor shortages this year.

On September 27, 2007, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) had already received enough petitions to exceed the cap for H-2B visas for the first half of FY 2008. Reaching the H-2B cap four days before the start of the new fiscal year highlights the immediate need for Congress to extend the returning worker program to help small and seasonal businesses fill their seasonal labor needs and keep full-time Americans working.

We, the undersigned cosponsors of the Save Our Small and Seasonal Businesses Act of 2007 (H.R. 1843), are asking you to take action and bring a clean extension of the H-2B returning worker provision to the floor for a vote as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Diane DeHette
Wayne T. Gilchrist
~~R. D. Hargis~~
Randy Koll
C. W. Santorum
Todd R. Platts
Ting J.
Peter Hoekstra
Barney Frank
E. J. Conaway
Ron Kind
Joseph R. Pitts
Tim Walley
J. B. Wilson
For 7 Solaz

Wally Herger
~~Sam J. M. M. M.~~
Marilyn Musgrave
Tom Lill
Barbara Cubin
Virginia Fox
Jeff Flake
Earl Blumenauer
John P. O'Connell
Earl Blumenauer
John Kline
Markus J. Bordello
Doug Lamborn
Sander Levin
Steve N. Roth

Cc: The Honorable James Clyburn, House Majority Whip
The Honorable John Conyers, Chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary
The Honorable Zoe Lofgren, Chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Immigration,
Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law

Jim Oberstar

Allan R. Wynn

Jim Costa

Steve Braun

Phyllis

Thelma Drake

Mark Udall

Jim W. Brown
John P. Salmon

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